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### CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A tamping labeler for use in a labeling apparatus,  
comprising:

a tamping face having a ~~base and~~ plurality of projections projecting outwardly  
from said ~~base~~ tamping face for maintaining at least a substantial portion of a label at a  
stand off from said ~~base~~ tamping face.

2. (Original) The tamping labeler of claim 1 wherein said tamping face has a  
plurality of holes.

3. (Original) The tamping labeler of claim 2 wherein said projections are arranged  
such that each hole is at least partially surrounded by at least one of said projections.

4. (Original) The tamping labeler of claim 1 wherein at least some of said  
projections are ridges.

5. (Original) The tamping labeler of claim 3 wherein said at least some of said  
projections are circular ridges.

6. (Original) The tamping labeler of claim 1 wherein at least some of said  
projections are domes.

7. (Original) The tamping labeler of claim 1 further comprising flexible accordion  
sides for allowing said tamping labeler to extend and retract.

8. (Original) The tamping labeler of claim 7 further comprising a one-way valve for  
blocking said holes when a positive pressure is introduced into said tamping labeler.

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9. (Original) The tamping labeler of claim 1 wherein said tamping face is textured and said projections result from the texture of said tamping face.
10. (Currently amended) A bellows for use in a labeling apparatus, comprising:  
a tamping face having a ~~base and~~ plurality of projections projecting outwardly from said ~~base~~ tamping face for maintaining a label at a stand off from said ~~base~~ tamping face.
11. (Currently amended) A bellows for use in a labeling apparatus, comprising:  
a tamping face having a plurality of projections projecting outwardly from said face for reducing surface tension between a label held by vacuum to said tamping face and said tamping face when said tamping face is wet.
12. (Currently amended) A product labeling apparatus, comprising:  
an indexing turret carrying a plurality of tamping labelers, each tamping labeler having a tamping face with a ~~base and~~ plurality of projections projecting outwardly from said ~~base~~ tamping face for maintaining at least a substantial portion of a label at a stand off from said ~~base~~ tamping face;  
a vacuum chamber in fluid communication with each tamping labeler other than at a labeling station;  
a positive pressure chamber in fluid communication with a tamping labeler at said labeling station;  
a label supply for supplying a label to a tamping face of a tamping labeler at a label supply station spaced from said labeling station.

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13. (Original) The product labeling apparatus of claim 12 wherein said tamping labeler comprises a flexible bellows having a retracted position and an extended tamping position.
14. (Currently amended) The product labeling apparatus of claim 12 wherein said ~~base of said~~ tamping face of each tamping labeler has a plurality of holes.
15. (Original) The labeling apparatus of claim 14 wherein said projections are arranged such that each hole is at least partially surrounded by at least one of said projections.
16. (Original) The labeling apparatus of claim 13 wherein at least some of said projections are ridges.
17. (Original) The labeling apparatus of claim 15 wherein said at least some of said projections are circular ridges.
18. (Original) The labeling apparatus labeler of claim 13 wherein at least some of said projections are domes.
19. (Original) The labeling apparatus of claim 14 further comprising a one-way valve for blocking said holes when a positive pressure is introduced into said tamping labeler.
20. (Original) The labeling apparatus of claim 13 wherein said tamping face is textured and said projections result from the texture of said tamping face.